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Date: December 3, 2012 12:19:55 PM EST
To: "dberger@nyclu.org" <dberger@nyclu.org>
Subject: 4.19 License Plate Reader (LPR)

Per your FOI request dated 11/28/2012 I have attached our policy on the use of our License Plate Reader which should answer all of your questions. We purchased one LPR off of a Edward Byrne Equipment approximately 5 years ago. We do not retain copies of the invoice as it gets turned over to our finance department. The unit is currently out of service and in need of repair. Officers are trained in the field and with hands on the machine.

Lt Eric Johansen




The City of Peekskill Police Department

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Department Manual

Section No. 4.19

| License Plate Reader (LPR) | | | |
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| Date Issued 03/10/2009 | Date Effective Immediately | Revision Date | Page 1 of 3 pages |
| Issuing Authority: Eugene Tumolo, Chief of Police  | | | |

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide law enforcement agencies with guidelines for the use, management, storage, and retrieval of License plate reader (LPR).

II. Background

A license plate reader can recognize over 1,000 license plates an hour on vehicles as they pass either a portable or stationary unit at vehicle speeds up to 70 miles per hour. The Information downloaded into the plate reader from the New York State Police Information Network (NYSPIN) allows a law enforcement officer performing a special detail or routine patrol to detect a motor vehicle driven by an unlicensed and/or revoked operator or any other motor vehicle insurance violation. This occurs even if the driver of the vehicle has not committed a traffic offense or been involved in a traffic incident. Based on a NYSPIN "HIT", a police officer can intervene before the offender is involved in a traffic accident or commits another violation that could result in serious injury of an innocent victim. Not only may the license plate readers be utilized for traffic enforcement, it may also be an essential tool when an AMBER Alert is issued.

III. Definition

1. License Plate Reading (LPR)

Technology that uses specialized digital cameras and computers to quickly capture a large number of photographs of license plates, convert them to text, and compare that text to Department of Motor Vehicles database.

2. Hot List

This list is typically transferred daily and can be updated by the operator or by a central station if wireless communications are not available in the vehicle. The hot list can contain any set of plate data, from terrorist watch lists, to stolen vehicles, to parking scofflaws.

IV. Policy

LPR Operator Selection:

Consider the following qualifications when approving members for LPR training:

- Members driving record;
- Past demonstration of good judgment regarding vehicle pursuits; and
- Excellent VTL and Penal Law enforcement activity.

Training:

Officers are prohibited from using the LPR system until they have been properly trained in its use, and have been instructed as to operational protocols.

Special Details:

Special details or assignments must be approved prior to any use by a supervisor for any non-traditional VTL details (i.e. in high crime areas during Operation Impact details, or during directed criminal investigations).

LPR Maintenance:

The LPR camera lenses shall be cleaned with Department approved lens cloths prior to every deployment. Any damage shall be reported immediately to the operator's immediate supervisor. Technical questions concerning the LPR shall be directed to department or City of Peekskill IT manager.

V. Procedures

A. Member of Service

- 1 When assigned to utilizing the LPR at the beginning of each detail or shift; A 'start-shift' from the TraCS application shall be conducted to update and transfer the required wanted files to the vehicle computer.
- 2 After the initial upload to the LPR, it will become necessary to add specific information, the database can be "customized" by manually entering information. This option is provided on the computer desktop screen under the "Operation" icon and should be utilized in cases where crimes are reported after the LPR has been deployed (e.g., Stolen Vehicles, Amber Alerts, radio item broadcasts, etc.) or when a manual plate check needs to be performed.
- 3 Any time the "LPR" unit indicates a "HIT" on a wanted or suspected plate; users must verify same making sure to follow all NYSPIN policies and procedures.
- 4 At this time the LPR does not interface with real time NCIC or NYSPIN data, the LPR is ONLY to be used as an investigative tool, and does not constitute probable cause. Confirmation is essential prior to any law enforcement action.
- 5 If the hit is **Verified** on an unoccupied vehicle – maintain visual observation while supervisory contact is initiated to determine if immediate recovery action will be taken or whether surveillance will be continued depending on the circumstances of the offense.

**NYS AMBER and NYS DCJS Missing Child/College Student Alert
Activations Communications:**

6. When a member of service is notified of a confirmed NYS Amber Alert broadcast, and are presently utilizing LPR equipment;
 - a. Manually place involved vehicle plate number(s) into the vehicle database. Officers should proceed to patrol areas which are likely to increase the chance of encountering the vehicle. Upon receipt of updated information (i.e., involved vehicle plate number changes), patrols must immediately update database entries.
 - b. If the vehicle is encountered, actions taken should ensure the safe recovery of the missing child.
 - c. Officer experience and judgment, as well as agency specific policies and procedures (i.e., critical incident management), will dictate the best course of action to take.
 - d. All actions should be documented in accordance with agency policies and procedures.

B. Desk Officer**NYS AMBER and NYS DCJS Missing Child/College Student Alert Activations
Communications;**

1. Upon receiving notification (via fax, NYSPIN, email or other notification system) that a NYS AMBER Alert or NYS DCJS Missing Child/College Student Alert activation has occurred, communications staff must immediately review details and notify supervision.
2. Unless directed to take alternate action, communications staff must immediately broadcast Alert details to all available patrols and must specifically advise patrols using LPR equipment to manually place involved vehicle plate number(s) into respective vehicle LPR databases.
3. Upon receipt of updated information, communications staff should immediately provide this information to supervision and patrols. If an involved vehicle plate number changes, patrols using LPR equipment should be directed to update database entries. All actions taken by communications staff should be documented in accordance with agency policies and procedures.

C. Supervisor

1. Assign the LPR to the appropriate operator(s) for shift or for special details.
2. If reported un-operational, notify the Patrol Lieutenant and the City of Peekskill IT manager via Special Report.

D. Lieutenant

1. Maintain an adequate number of trainers;
2. Select and train approved members to operate the LPR system (All training must be documented);
3. Arrange for additional training when and as deemed necessary; and Maintain records identifying approved LPR details and their results and ensure appropriate documentation of significant incidents and arrests that are related to LPR usage.